Smuggling of Opium through U.P., Nepal Border

1310. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a record production of opium in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether consequently there has been a rise in opium smuggling through its porous border with Nepal;

(c) whether the smugglers in turn are bringing firearms into the country; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken to curb this smuggling on Uttar Pradesh-Nepal border?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Intelligence gathered and seizures made during the year do not indicate any such trend.

(d) Cultivation of opium is permitted under Government's strict licencing, supervision and control. Strict vigil is maintained by the Indo-Nepal Border Police, Central Bureau of Narcotics, Customs, Directorate General of Revenue Intelligence, Narcotics Control Bureau and other State Enforcement Agencies to check illicit diversion/smuggling of opium and other contraband. Stringent action is taken under narcotic laws in all cases of embezzlement of opium by cultivators and drug traffickers.

R.B.I. Building of Bhopal

†1311. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the construction of office building of Reserve Bank of India at Bhopal was completed in 1992;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Reserve Bank of India has not so far started the operation of its Public Accounts Department and Public Debt Office; and

(c) if so, by when the officers of Reserve Bank of India at Bhopal

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

will start the full operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that construction of the office building at Bhopal was completed in 1992. RBI has further reported that the transactions of the Government of Madhya Pradesh are being handled by State Bank of India and State Bank of Indore and the arrangements are working smoothly. RBI's plans do not envisage the opening of a full fledged Public Accounts Department. While appropriate action has been initiated, no specific date can be indicated for the completion of the full fledged PDO Software project and its relevant connectivity.

Public Undertakings under Reserved Category

†1312. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have put the names of a few Public undertakings in the reserved category with the objective of not privatising them; and

(b) if so, the details of these undertakings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Government have categorised PSUs as strategic and Non-strategic. Strategic Public Sector Undertakings are those which are in the area of arms and ammunition and the allied items of defence equipment, atomic energy and railway transport. At present, no disinvestment is proposed in any Public Sector Enterprises falling in the above "strategic" areas.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.